

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 EB-08 SP-02 L-03
ABF-01 /086 W

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O 221056Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8575

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 1843

FOR AID/OFDA/MARTINDELL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, SWEL, RO
SUBJECT: EARTHQUAKE ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 55522

1. AT MY FIRST MEETING WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER CORNEL BURTICA ON MARCH 17, HE GAVE ME VERBAL AND PERSONAL RESPONSE TO MY LETTER OF MARCH 7 CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION OF \$13 MILLION TRANCHE OF U.S. ASSISTANCE FOR EARTHQUAKE REHABILITATION. BURTICA, WHO REPLACED DPM PATAN ON MARCH 8 AND IS CONSEQUENTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR NEGOTIATING WITH USG ON THIS ISSUE, SAID THAT GOR WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH TEXT OF PROPOSED LETTER TRANSMITTED IN PARAGRAPH 2 OF REFTEL. IN PARTICULAR, THE SENTENCE READING, QUOTE, AID REPRESENTATIVES AND U.S. EMBASSY OFFICIALS WILL BE WELCOME TO INSPECT THE AID-FINANCED EQUIPMENT AT REASONABLE INTERVALS . . . , END QUOTE, CREATED GREAT DIFFICULTIES. HE SAID THAT INSPECTION PROVISION WOULD BE ENTIRELY NEW IN ROMANIAN EXPERIENCE SINCE IT HAD NOT BEEN FEATURE OF ASSISTANCE FROM ANY OTHER COUNTRY. IN HIS VIEW, THEREFORE, THIS CONDITION OF U.S. ASSISTANCE SURPASSES NORMAL AID CONDITIONAL

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TIONS. BURTICA PROMISED TO TAKE UP QUESTION WITH PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU AND TO DEVELOP OFFICIAL GOVERNMENTAL POSITION ON THIS POINT.

2. I REPLIED THAT IN WORKING OUT AGREEMENTS SUCH AS ONE UNDER DISCUSSION, ACCOUNT HAS TO BE TAKEN OF LAWS AND PRACTICES OF BOTH COUNTRIES INVOLVED.

I ADDED THAT WE ARE EAGER TO FIND SOLUTION WHICH WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO CONCERNS AND PRINCIPLES OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS. NOTING THAT FULL YEAR HAD NOW ELAPSED SINCE EARTHQUAKE, I INDICATED TO BURTICA THAT WASHINGTON WAS FINDING IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HAD NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED. I URGED HIM TO GIVE US GOR'S SPECIFIC RESERVATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT THEY COULD BE CONVEYED TO WASHINGTON FOR CONSIDERATION, SUBSEQUENT TO WHICH NEGOTIATIONS COULD COMMENCE. I ALSO POINTED OUT THAT FORMULA SUGGESTED BY WASHINGTON IN REFTTEL AND CONVEYED TO FOREIGN TRADE MINISTRY IN MY LETTER OF MARCH 7 EMBODIES SUBSTANTIAL ADJUSTMENTS TO TRADITIONAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENT AND RECIPIENTS AND THAT THESE ADJUSTMENTS WERE MADE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ROMANIA'S NEEDS AND SENSITIVITIES.

3. SUBSEQUENT TO MY MEETING WITH BURITICA, ECONOMIC CONSELOR LEE SANDERS WAS IN TOUCH WITH ONE OF BURTICA'S ASSISTANTS, CONSTANTIN FOTA. THROUGH FOTA, WE RECEIVED WORD ON MARCH 21 THAT GOR'S UNWILLINGNESS TO AGREE TO INSPECTION FEATURE HAD BECOME FORMAL. MINISTRY HAS DECLINED TO PUT ITS RESERVATIONS INTO WRITING.

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4. I AM AWARE OF YOUR PERSONAL INTEREST IN IMPLEMENTATION OF EARTHQUAKE ASSISTANCE PACKAGE, AND I KNOW THAT DURING YOUR VISIT TO ROMANIA IN OCTOBER, 1977, YOU EXPRESSED TO BOTH GOR OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF EMBASSY STAFF YOUR WILLINGNESS TO DO WHAT YOU COULD TO EXPEDITE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECOND TRANCHE OF \$13 MILLION. IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT I CALL SITUATION DESCRIBED ABOVE TO YOUR ATTENTION NOW. QUITE FRANKLY, IT IS UNCLEAR TO ME EXACTLY WHAT PARAMETERS OF AID AND CONGRESSIONAL TOLERANCE MIGHT BE. THE INSTRUCTIONS I HAVE RECEIVED SO FAR--IN FIRST INSTANCE, FOR FORMAL AGREEMENT, AND IN SECOND INSTANCE, A FALL-BACK TO SIMPLY A LETTER EXCHANGED BETWEEN MYSELF AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE OR FOREIGN AFFAIRS--SUGGEST THERE MAY BE SOME GIVE IN OUR NEGOTIATING POSITION. IF I COULD GET CLEAR IDEA OF HOW FAR WE CAN GO IN MEETING THE ROMANIAN OBJECTIONS, I WOULD BE IN POSITION TO UNDERTAKE REAL NEGOTIATIONS.

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8576

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUCHAREST 1843

5. I UNDERSTAND SENSITIVITY AT POLITICAL/CONGRESSIONAL LEVEL SURROUNDING PROCUREMENT AND USE OF CERTAIN EQUIPMENT AND BELIEVE THIS CONCERN MAY BE ADDRESSED IN PART THROUGH CAREFUL DECISIONS ON WHAT AID WILL PROCURE FOR ROMANIA. IF ITEMS PROCURED ARE CAREFULLY AGREED UPON IN ADVANCE, A SOMEWHAT LESS FORMAL SYSTEM OF REPORTING AND INSPECTION MIGHT WELL BE TOLERABLE.

6. OF THE THREE ASSURANCES LISTED IN PARAGRAPH 1.C OF REFTEL, I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THERE IS NO PROBLEM FOR GOR IN NO. 1. AS REGARDS NO. 2, GOR IS UNDER IMPRESSION THAT AID WILL BE AWARE OF ARRIVAL OF EQUIPMENT IN ROMANIA THROUGH RECEIPT OF SHIPPING DOCUMENTS. (IN VIEW OF DIFFICULTIES WE HAVE HAD IN INDUCING GOR TO ISSUE REPORTS ON ACTUAL USE OF MATERIALS DELIVERED UNDER \$7 MILLION TRANCHE AGREEMENT, I DOUBT THAT COMPLIANCE WITH REPORTING REQUIREMENT WILL COME EASILY.) AS I HAVE POINTED OUT ABOVE, REAL STICKING POINT IS ASSURANCE NO. 3. BURTICA'S CONCESSION ON THIS WAS THAT I WOULD BE FREE IN FUTURE, AS AMBASSADORS HAVE BEEN IN PAST, TO VISIT ANY PART OF ROMANIA AND LOOK AT ANY PARTICULAR PROJECT. FINALLY, GOR HAS NO DIFFICULTY WITH SHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPHS 1.D AND 2 OF REFTEL.

7. MY INTEREST IN FINDING SOME SOLUTION TO THIS
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SITUATION STEMS NOT ONLY FROM URGE TO MOVE THIS LONG-DELAYED PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE BUT ALSO FROM FACT THAT PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU WILL BE MAKING OFFI-

CIAL VISIT TO UNITED STATES COMMENCING APRIL 12.
I WOULD PARTICULARLY LIKE TO HAVE AGREEMENT WITH GOR
ON EQRTQUAKE PROGRAM PRIOR TO PRESIDENTS' MEETING.
IF I CAN GET CLEAR IDEA FROM YOU OF AID'S POSITION
AND BIT OF COOPERATION FROM GOR, IT MIGHT BE
POSSIBLE TO WRAP THIS UP.
AGGREY

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